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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000788

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: CIVILIAN PERSPECTIVE ON GUINEAN COUP D'ETAT

REF: CONAKRY 0787

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (S) SUMMARY. The military coup launched by members of the 19th promotion continues to evolve relatively peacefully. Various civilian representatives reportedly went to Camp Alpha Yaya to begin negotiating the details of the anticipated transitional council. Civilian contacts seem to be quietly criticizing the coup, but waiting to see how things develop before taking any action. Conakry remains calm with no reports of casualties. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (S) Members of the 19th promotion continue to carry out a coup plot they launched early this morning after the Guinean Government announced President Conte's death (reftel). Embassy sources report that civilian leaders, including unnamed representatives from the labor unions, youth groups, and local businesses, went to Camp Alpha Yaya this morning to begin negotiating with coup leaders regarding the composition of the transitional council, now called the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD).

¶3. (S) Econ LES spoke with two prominent youth leaders, Mouctar Diallo (head of a new youth political party) and Dansa Kourouma (head of an NGO), this morning. Emphasizing that he was speaking for himself and not for his organization, Diallo said that he did not support a military takeover of the government. Kourouma said that civil society leaders planned to meet soon in order to draft a public declaration. Speaking "off the record," Kourouma said that he would not support Sompore as the constitutional successor to the president, pointing out that his political mandate has expired. Kourouma added that he supports the departure of the old guard in order to make way for "new faces and new leadership." (COMMENT. Both of these youth leaders were implicated in a failed September youth movement that planned to force the president's resignation. END COMMENT).

¶4. (SBU) Brief telephone conversations with opposition political party leaders suggest that they are observing events before deciding on a course of action. Jean Marie Dore, head of the UPG (Union for Guinean Progress) told Pol LES that he had been expecting a coup, but was surprised by the speed in which it took place. Dore added that he does not currently have an official reaction, and is observing the situation. Dr. Diane, Secretary General of the RPG (Rally for the Guinean People), essentially said the same thing. Sidya Toure, leader of the UPR (Union for Progress and Renewal) said that he is observing the situation, but that "a coup d'etat was not the answer."

¶5. (SBU) Both Charge and DCM have been in contact with various diplomatic missions, including the embassies of Brazil, France, Spain, Russia, and the United Kingdom.

Diplomats also seem to be adopting a wait and see approach. No one is currently considering evacuation of personnel or dependents.

¶16. (S) An Embassy contact reported that the military had stationed a tank near the entrance to the Conakry international airport as a "precautionary measure." Contact said that the tank was not blocking access to the airport, and that the airport remained open. Later reports indicated that soldiers backing the coup had gained control of the airport and seaport, but that operations at both ports continued as usual.

¶17. (S) Sources indicate that approximately 150 soldiers sympathetic to the coup currently control what is commonly known as "Kilometer 36," which is the main transportation artery controlling access to and from the city of Conakry.

¶18. (S) Soldiers behind the coup told DATT that they had arrested four generals earlier in the day (lowering the number previously reported), but that they had released them after the generals promised to bring back the remaining generals. After departing, the generals reportedly enlisted several bodyguards each. Members of the 19th promotion told DATT that they are offering the generals protection if they willingly come to Camp Alpha Yaya. Later reports indicated that some generals had elected to do exactly that.

¶19. (U) Multiple contacts have reported that the city of Conakry remains quiet, even in the downtown area, although there is a clear military presence. Most local businesses

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are closed. There has been some sporadic gunfire, but Embassy has received no reports of casualties.

COMMENT

¶10. (S) The coup appears to have been well planned. The immediate political transition seems to be progressing peacefully, but that could change quickly if rival groups begin to execute maneuvers to seize power. Civilians seem to be publicly criticizing the coup even though they have privately told Embassy officials in the past that they would support such a move. Now that a coup has materialized, they will likely look for opportunities to insert themselves in the process during this critical period in order to ensure that the transition is ultimately shaped by civilians. END COMMENT.

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